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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/57/556/Add.2 and Corr.1 to 3)*]

57/211. Human rights and extreme poverty

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[2] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[2] and other human rights instruments adopted by the United Nations,

Considering the relevant provisions of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[3] and of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, adopted by the World Summit on 12 March 1995,[4] and the outcome document of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly entitled "World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalizing world", adopted at Geneva on 1 July 2000,[5] and the recognition of the contributions of the outcomes of recent United Nations conferences, special sessions and summits, such as the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico, from 18 to 22 March 2002,[6] and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002,[7]

Welcoming the decision of the World Summit on Sustainable Development to establish a world solidarity fund to eradicate poverty and promote social and human development, as defined in paragraph 7 (*b*) of its Plan of Implementation,[8]

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[3] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[4] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6–12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[5] Resolution S-24/2, annex.

[6] *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18–22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[7] See *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and Corr.1), chap. I.

[8] Ibid., chap. I, resolution 2, para. 7 (*b*).

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration[9] and the development goals contained therein, including the commitment to halve by 2015 the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger,

Recalling also its resolutions 47/196 of 22 December 1992, by which it declared 17 October the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, 48/183 of 21 December 1993, by which it proclaimed 1996 the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty, 50/107 of 20 December 1995, by which it proclaimed the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997–2006), and 56/207 of 21 December 2001 on the implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997–2006), including the proposal to establish a world solidarity fund for poverty eradication,

Recalling further its resolution 55/106 of 4 December 2000 and its previous resolutions on human rights and extreme poverty,

Recalling its resolution 52/134 of 12 December 1997, in which it recognized that the enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights was essential for the understanding, promotion and protection of all human rights,

Recalling also resolution 56/207, in which it expressed its deep concern that the number of people living in extreme poverty in many countries continued to increase, with women and children constituting the majority and the most affected group, in particular in African countries and the least developed countries,

Bearing in mind Commission on Human Rights resolutions 2000/12 of 17 April 2000,[10] 2001/31 of 23 April 2001[11] and 2002/30 of 22 April 2002,[12] as well as resolution 1996/23 of 29 August 1996[13] of the Subcommission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities,[14] and resolutions 2001/8 of 15 August 2001[15] and 2002/13 of 14 August 2002[16] of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights,

Recalling its resolution 47/134 of 18 December 1992, in which it reaffirmed that extreme poverty and exclusion from society constituted a violation of human dignity and stressed the need for a complete and in-depth study of extreme poverty, based on the active and informed participation of the people living in poverty,

Recognizing that the eradication of extreme poverty is a major challenge within the process of globalization and requires coordinated and continued policies through decisive national action and international cooperation,

Reaffirming that, since the existence of widespread extreme poverty inhibits the full and effective enjoyment of human rights and might, in some situations,

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[9] See resolution 55/2.

[10] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 3* and corrigendum (E/2000/23 and Corr. 1), chap. II, sect. A.

[11] Ibid., *2001, Supplement No. 3* (E/2001/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[12] Ibid., *2002, Supplement No. 3* (E/2002/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[13] See E/CN.4/1997/2-E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/41, chap. II, sect. A.

[14] Subsequently renamed the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (see Economic and Social Council decision 1999/256).

[15] See E/CN.4/2002/2-E/CN.4/Sub.2/2001/40, chap. II, sect. A.

[16] See E/CN.4/2003/2-E/CN.4/Sub.2/2002/46, chap. II, sect. A.

constitute a threat to the right to life, its immediate alleviation and eventual eradication must remain a high priority for the international community,

Considering that democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing,

Noting with interest the reports submitted to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General[17] and to the Commission on Human Rights by the independent expert on the question of human rights and extreme poverty[18] and the recommendations contained therein,

Also noting with interest the appointment of experts by the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, in the context of the fight against extreme poverty,[19]

1. *Reaffirms* that extreme poverty and exclusion from society constitute a violation of human dignity and that urgent national and international action is therefore required to eliminate them;

2. *Also reaffirms* that it is essential for States to foster participation by the poorest people in the decision-making process in the societies in which they live, in the promotion of human rights and in efforts to combat extreme poverty, and that it is essential for people living in poverty and vulnerable groups to be empowered to organize themselves and to participate in all aspects of political, economic and social life, in particular the planning and implementation of policies that affect them, thus enabling them to become genuine partners in development;

3. *Emphasizes* that extreme poverty is a major issue to be addressed by Governments, civil society and the United Nations system, including international financial institutions, and in this context reaffirms that political commitment is a prerequisite for the eradication of poverty;

4. *Recognizes* that surmounting extreme poverty constitutes an essential means to the full enjoyment of political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights, and reaffirms the interrelationship among these goals;

5. *Reaffirms* that the existence of widespread absolute poverty inhibits the full and effective enjoyment of human rights and renders democracy and popular participation fragile;

6. *Recognizes* the need to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, in order to address the most pressing social needs of people living in poverty, including through the design and development of appropriate mechanisms to strengthen and consolidate democratic institutions and governance;

7. *Reaffirms* the commitments to the achievement of the development and poverty eradication goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[9] and in the outcome documents of relevant major United Nations conferences, summits and special sessions;

8. *Invites* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, within the framework of the implementation of the United Nations Decade for the

[17] A/57/369.

[18] E/CN.4/2002/55.

[19] See Commission on Human Rights resolution 2002/30, sixteenth preambular paragraph, and resolution 2002/13 of the Subcommission on Human Rights.

Eradication of Poverty, to continue to give appropriate attention to the question of human rights and extreme poverty;

9. *Notes with appreciation* the specific actions taken by the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to mitigate the effects of extreme poverty on children, and the efforts of the United Nations Development Programme to give priority to the search for some means of alleviating poverty within the framework of the relevant resolutions, and urges them to continue this work;

10. *Calls upon* States, United Nations bodies, in particular the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Development Programme, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to continue to give appropriate attention to the links between human rights and extreme poverty;

11. *Decides* to consider this question further at its fifty-ninth session, under the sub-item entitled "Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms".

77th plenary meeting
18 December 2002